

The following is a complete listing of all claims in the application, with an indication of the status of each:

Listing of claims:

1 1 (Previously presented). A process for producing veneer strips or chipped wood,
2 comprising:

3 forming a plurality of wood groups, each of said wood groups comprising a
4 plurality of board portions positioned in a stacked manner, with their respective
5 grains parallel to one another and to a given grain direction;

6 arranging a plurality of said wood groups one behind the other in a line
7 extending in a longitudinal direction, with their respective grains parallel to said grain
8 direction, to form a closely packed line of said wood groups, comprising a leading
9 group and a plurality of successive groups;

10 feeding said line in said longitudinal direction, transverse to said grain
11 direction, toward a chipping tool, at an advancement speed, such that said leading
12 group is cut by said chipping tool exerting a cutting force on said leading group;

13 applying a longitudinal compressive force in said longitudinal direction, in a
14 manner such that said force urges said leading group by a successive group
15 immediately succeeding said leading group, wherein said longitudinal compressive
16 force exceeds said cutting force and

17 braking the advancement speed of said leading group such that said leading
18 group acts as an abutment to substantially absorb said longitudinal force.

1 2 (Previously presented). The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said longitudinal
2 compressive force generates an adhesion, between said leading group and the
3 successive group immediately succeeding said leading group, which exceeds said
4 cutting force.

1 3 (Previously presented). The process of claim 1, further comprising moistening
2 mutually facing longitudinal edges of at least two of said successive groups
3 sufficiently to increase adhesion between said at least two successive groups.

1 4 (previously presented). The process of claim 1, wherein said longitudinal force is
2 applied such that the longitudinal compressive force at the interfaces between
3 respective pairs of said wood groups increases along the line in the conveying
4 direction.

5 (Previously presented). The process of claim 1, wherein the longitudinal
compressive force is initially applied to said successive groups by a conveying
apparatus which acts directly, in the conveying direction, on at least one of said
successive groups.

1 6 (Previously presented). The process of claim 5, wherein said conveying apparatus
2 applies a force having a first magnitude in the conveying direction on at least one of
3 said successive groups and applies a force having a second magnitude in the
4 conveying direction on at least one other of said successive groups, wherein said first
5 magnitude is different than said second magnitude.

1 7 (Previously presented). The process of claim 1, wherein a vertical compressive
2 force is applied to the leading group upstream of the chipping tool, wherein said
3 vertical compressive force acts over the height of the leading group.

1 8 (Previously presented). The process of claim 1, wherein a horizontal compressive
2 force is applied to the leading group upstream of the chipping tool, wherein said
3 horizontal compressive force acts over the height of the leading group.

1 9 (Previously presented). The process of claim 7, wherein said feeding, said applying
2 a longitudinal compressive force, and said braking the advancement speed of the
3 leading group are performed so as to produce veneer strips or chipped wood of a

4 given thickness, and wherein the vertical force terminates at a distance from the
5 chipper tool which corresponds to between approximately one and two times said
6 given thickness.

10 (Cancelled).

1 11 (Previously presented). An apparatus for producing veneer strips or chipped wood,
2 comprising:

3 a) a chipping tool;

4 b) a feed means for feeding a plurality of wood groups, each wood group
5 being a stacked arrangement of planar wood pieces, toward said chipping tool, in
6 manner such that plurality of wood groups are fed in a successive manner, along a
7 line, and are spaced closely together, wherein said feed means includes
8 a conveyor for conveying said plurality of said wood groups in an
9 advancement direction, said advancement direction being a longitudinal direction
10 toward the chipping tool, said conveyor being constructed and arranged to apply an
11 advancement force in the advancement direction to at least one of said wood groups
12 such that a leading group, which is the wood group most proximal to the cutting tool
13 is urged, by at least one of the wood groups succeeding it, with a longitudinal
14 compressive force, said conveyor further including

15 i) an adjusting means for adjusting said longitudinal compressive
16 force to exceed a cutting force to which the leading group is subjected by the
17 chipping tool, and

18 ii) a braking means for applying a braking force to said leading group
19 at a location proximal to said cutting tool, said braking means having an
20 adjustment means for adjusting said braking force so as to substantially absorb
21 said longitudinal compressive force by said leading group acting as an
22 abutment.

1 12 (Previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said braking means
2 includes said conveyor being constructed and arranged to apply a first advancement

3 force to at least one of said wood groups and a second advancement force to at least
4 one other of said wood groups, said first advancement force having a magnitude
5 different than said second advancement force, wherein the difference in magnitude is
6 such that said leading group acts as a run-on brake by being braked in relation to one
7 or more of its spatially succeeding wood groups.

1 13 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the conveyor includes
2 at least one of a chain, belt and roller conveyor.

14. (Cancelled).

1 15 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the conveyor includes
2 a plurality of overlapping conveying chains.

1 16 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the conveyor is
2 constructed and arranged to selectively urge at least one of said wood groups at a first
3 advancement speed in the advancement direction and to selectively urge at least one
4 other said wood groups at a second advancement speed in the advancement direction,
5 and wherein the first advancement speed and the second advancement speed are
6 independently selectable.

1 17 (previously presented). The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein said braking
2 means includes a clamping means having a vertically movable clamping bar upstream
3 from and proximal to said chipping tool, constructed and arranged to selectively
4 apply a vertical clamping force to said leading group.

1 18 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said braking means
2 includes a clamping means having contact-pressure bars upstream from and proximal
3 to the chipping tool, on both sides of said feed line of said feed means, said contact-
4 pressure bars constructed and arranged to be selectively movable in a horizontal

5 direction, transverse to said feed line of said feed means, so as to selectively apply a
6 horizontal compressive force.

1 19 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said chipping tool
2 rotates in a plane and said feed line of said feed means forms a non-zero angle
3 relative to the normal of said plane, said angle being at least one of a horizontal and a
4 vertical relative to said normal.

1 20 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the feed means is
2 constructed and arranged to feed at least two parallel lines of said wood groups to
3 said cutting tool, and wherein said feed means includes at least one central partition
4 wall extending in the feed direction.

1 21 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising a feed
2 conveyor arranged upstream of the feed means for transferring said wood groups to
3 the feed means.

1 22 (Previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the chipping tool is
2 disk-type chipper having rotating knives.

1 23 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 22, wherein a stationary bridging
2 bar is arranged immediately upstream of the disk-type chipper, approximately a few
3 tenths of a millimeter upstream of the rotating knives.

1 24 (previously presented). The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the chipping tool is a
2 knife-ring flaker.

1 25 (Previously presented). The process of claim 7, wherein said vertical compressive
2 force has a selectable magnitude and further comprising a selecting of said
3 magnitude.

1 26 (previously presented). The process of claim 8, wherein said horizontal
2 compressive force has a selectable magnitude and further comprising a selecting of
3 said magnitude.

1 27 (Previously presented). The process of claim 8, wherein said feeding said line in
2 said longitudinal direction, said applying a longitudinal compressive force, and said
3 braking the advancement speed of the leading group are performed so as to produce
4 veneer strips or chipped wood of a given thickness, and wherein the horizontal force
5 terminates at a distance from the chipper tool which corresponds to between
6 approximately one and two times said given thickness.

1 28 (Previously presented). The process of claim 9, wherein said vertical compressive
2 force has a selectable magnitude and further comprising a selecting of said
3 magnitude.

1 29 (Previously presented). The process of claim 27, wherein said horizontal
2 compressive force has a selectable magnitude and further comprising a selecting of
3 said magnitude.